

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3010

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 23625

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS USLO PEKING

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CB, CH, FR

SUBJECT: CAMBODIA IN CONTEXT OF POMPIDOU'S PEKING TRIP

REF: PARIS 23472

1. IN COURSE OF GENERAL DISCUSSION OF CAMBODIA, QUAI DIRECTOR FOR ASIA FROMENT-MEURICE TOLD AMBASSADOR EMORY SWANK THAT CAMBODIA WOULD CERTAINLY BE AMONG TOPICS DISCUSSED BY THE FRENCH PRESIDENT WITH PRC LEADERS. FROMENT-MEURICE COULD NOT INDICATE PRECISELY HOW MATTER WOULD BE RAISED, BUT FRANCE WOULD SET FORTH ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF AN EARLY, NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AND REQUEST PRC VIEW ON THE BEST WAY TO STOP THE COMBAT. FROMENT-MEURICE THOUGHT IT CLEAR THAT THE PRC DID NOT WISH TO SEE AN INDOCHINA DOMINATED BY HANOI, AND PEKING APPEARS TO WISH AN EARLY END TO THE CONFLICT, WHICH IF CONTINUED, COULD SERVE TO INCREASE DRV POWER ON THE PENINSULA.

2. ACCORDING TO FROMENT-MEURICE, WHEN FRENCH HAD TALKED TO PRC LEADERS BEFORE, THEY SUGGESTED THAT GOF CONVINCE USG TO TALK WITH SIHANOUK. GIVEN SIHANOUK'S RECENT STATEMENTS, FROMENT-MEURICE DID NOT EXPECT THE SAME LINE. ALSO, FROMENT-MEURICE CLAIMED PRC LEADERS SAID THAT USG HAD PRO-CONFIDENTIAL

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POSED THAT BOTH SIHANOUK AND LON NOL LEAVE THE SCENE AND THOSE LEFT ON THE TWO SIDES COULD THEN BEGIN TO NEGOTIATE A SOLUTION. THIS POSITION WAS UNACCEPTABLE TO FUNK/GRUNK. FROMENT-MEURICE ASKED WHAT THE CURRENT USG POSITION WAS ON THE

ROLE OF SIHANOUK; HE HAD GRADUALLY GOTTEN THE IMPRESSION THAT THE US WAS NOW MORE FLEXIBLE THAN BEFORE.

3. SWANK SAID THAT US HAD NOT BEEN CLOSED TO IDEA OF SEEING SIHANOUK, BUT OUR FUNDAMENTAL POSITION WAS THAT A SETTLEMENT WOULD REQUIRE CONTACTS BETWEEN THE TWO KHMER SIDES. FUNK/GRUNK APPARENTLY THOUGHT A TOTAL MILITARY VICTORY WAS POSSIBLE IN THE FAIRLY NEAR FUTURE AT NOT EXCESSIVE COST, AN OPINION WHICH UNDERESTIMATED GRK/FANK CAPABILITIES. SWANK THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT TO CONVINCE THE FUNK/GRUNK, PERHAPS THROUGH THE CHINESE, THAT SUCH A MILITARY VICTORY WAS NOT POSSIBLE, AND THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WHICH WOULD REQUIRE CONTACTS BETWEEN THE TWO KHMER SIDES.

4. FROMENT-MEURICE SAID THAT IF THE US WAS NOW PREPARED TO SEE SIHANOUK PLAY A ROLE IN A KHMER SOLUTION, THE CHINESE IMPRESSION SHOULD BE CORRECTED. SWANK NOTED THAT IT WOULD BE EASIER TO CONCEIVE OF A ROLE FOR SIHANOUK IF HE WERE TO ADOPT A MOREMODERATE POSITION RATHERTHAN BEING OPPOSED TO ANY KIND OF COMPROMISE. IT WAS NOT SO MUCH A QUESTION OF SIHANOUK'S PERSONAL ROLE AS OF THE FUNK/GRUNK POLICY OF OPPOSING ANY SOLUTION WHICH ENTAILED CONTACTS BETWEEN THE TWO KHMER SIDES. IRWIN

NOTE BY OCT: PARIS 23625 NOT PASSED USLO PEKING.

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